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State Overview

IDAHO'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DECREASED TO 4.9 PERCENT

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for July 2004 was 4.9 percent, a decrease of one-tenth of a percentage point from June's rate of 5.0 percent. Idaho's July unemployment rate was seven-tenths of a percentage point below the 5.6 percent rate experienced one year ago. Idaho's unemployment rate for July was lower than the national rate of 5.5 percent, which also decreased one-tenth of a percentage point from June.

Idaho's seasonally adjusted *Civilian Labor Force* was essentially unchanged in July from June. The number of unemployed persons decreased to 34,600 in July, down 700 from June. The decrease in the number of unemployed persons followed two months of significant increases. The number of employed persons increased by 1,400 to 672,400. These changes resulted in a *Civilian Labor Force* of 706,600 in July, up 700 from June 2004.

The changes from July 2003 show that Idaho's labor force has increased 12,800 persons, or 1.8 percent. From one year ago, the number of persons employed increased 17,000, up 2.6 percent, and the number of persons unemployed decreased 4,200, down 10.8 percent. The decrease in the number of unemployed workers is not unusual, but the size of the decrease was encouraging. The decrease from one year ago reflects the recovery of Idaho's economy as fewer people are looking for jobs.

NEW PROGRAM ADDED TO IDAHO'S iLMI WEBSITE

(See FYI page 21 for an introduction to LED)

The Local Employment Dynamics (LED) web page for Idaho was launched in mid-September on the iLMI (Idaho Labor Market Information) website. It includes basic information about the new program, but will expand as more data and links become available. Idaho Commerce & Labor want our customers to become acquainted with the data and its uses. Please check the website periodically because new information will continue to be added. The web address is www.jobservice.ws. Look for the LED links on the left blue menu bar to navigate to the LED Program page.



COUNTY AND LABOR MARKET AREA LABOR FORCE HIGHLIGHTS

State Table 1 on page 3 lists the labor force components for Idaho's counties, labor market areas, and major cities.

Four counties experienced double-digit unemployment rates in July: Adams at 15.5 percent was down three-tenths of a percentage point from June, Benewah at 10.6 percent was up eight-tenths of a percentage point from June, Clearwater at 10.4 percent was down 2.4 percentage points from June, and Washington at 10.0 percent was unchanged from June.

Unemployment rates below 3.0 percent occurred during July 2004 in the following four counties: Madison at 1.6 percent was up one-tenth of a percentage point (16 people) from June, Owyhee at 1.8 percent was down two-tenths of a percentage point (3 people) from June, Oneida at 2.3 percent was down five-tenths of a percentage point (10 people) from June, and Franklin at 2.7 percent was up one-tenth of a percentage point (one person) from June.

The Idaho-Lewis Labor Market Area's (LMA) unemployment rate was the highest among the LMAs. The July unemployment rate was 8.2 percent, down one-tenth of a percentage point from June. The lowest rate occurred in the Bonneville LMA with 3.7 percent, unchanged from the previous month.

The Boise City Metropolitan Statistical Area's July unemployment rate of 4.6 percent was unchanged. However, that rate was a substantial improvement over July 2003 when the rate was 5.4 percent. This is due to an 8,140 increase in employment and a 1,680 decrease in the number of unemployed.

NONFARM PAYROLL JOBS

State Table 2 on page 5 provides employment details for the major nonfarm industries in Idaho.

Although the number of persons employed, as measured by a household survey increased by 1,400 from June to July, the total number of *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs*, measured by a business establishment survey, decreased by 2,300. It is not unusual for these two employment measures to move in opposite directions or to have large differences in the amount of change in each measure. Nor is it unusual to have a decline in the payroll numbers from June to July in Idaho. Last year, for example, there was a decline of 6,500 in the monthly jobs count from June to July.

Some of the reasons for the differences in the employment measures are fairly well known: the household survey is a count of people while the employer survey is a count of jobs; the household survey includes farm workers, family workers, and self-employed individuals and are not counted in the employer survey. The household survey includes Idahoans who work in another state, while the employer survey does not (but it does include workers who live in another state who work for an Idaho employer). Some analysts contend the employer survey

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or to the Regional Labor Economists noted in each area news section.

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has an inherent lag in identifying new employers and including them in the survey. Whatever the reason, it is wise not to compare one measurement against the other, but to look for trends in each measure separately.

The *Good-Producing Industries* added 2,100 jobs from June to July, a 2.0 percent increase. *Construction* had a strong 4.1 percent increase, or 1,700 new jobs. The state's housing and commercial construction activity just keeps going at a high pace, and the summer is the time for road construction. Not only is the July *Construction* count of 43,300 a new high for the year, it also is an all-time record high (subject to possible revisions of this preliminary estimate). The year-over-year comparison is just as impressive: 3,900 additional jobs for a 9.9 percent growth rate. The reasons for this high pace remain the same—continuing population growth, low interest rates, and a state economy in generally good shape.

There was virtually no change in Idaho's total *Manufacturing* as a net of only 400 jobs was added from June to July. Although *Veneer & Engineered Wood Products* had a 7.7 percent job loss from June, it was just a loss of 100 jobs. The year-over-year comparison shows no change. *Computer & Electronic Products Manufacturing* gained 100 jobs from June, and added 700 jobs from July 2003. The year-over-year gain occurred in spite of the loss of nearly 140 jobs earlier this year when an electronics firm in Nampa closed its facility. Idaho's *Food Manufacturing* industry has been declining and July's loss of 200 jobs from June continues the trend. The other manufacturing industries had very little numerical change, if any, for the month or for the year.

The *Service-Providing Industries* had a loss of 4,400 jobs between June and July. Nine individual industries (at the 3-digit NAICS level) experienced job losses; most of them were slight—100 jobs—and are considered negligible. The industries with losses of 500 or more were concentrated in the various sectors of education and were seasonal. Some teachers and support staff continued working past mid-June, when the employer survey occurs, but were laid off by mid-July. In some cases summer school sessions ended by mid-July and staff were no longer working. Many teachers remain in the labor force during the summer because they have another job or are looking for one. However, there are also several who do not stay in the labor force,

State Table 1: July 2004 Labor Force (preliminary)				
Seasonally Adjusted	Labor Force	Unemp.	% Unemp.	Total Emp.
Seaport LMA	35,581	1,418	4.0	34,163
Nez Perce County	23,484	791	3.4	22,694
Asotin County, WA	12,096	627	5.2	11,469
Boise City MSA	251,508	11,568	4.6	239,940
Ada County	179,915	7,150	4.0	172,765
Canyon County	71,593	4,418	6.2	67,175
Pocatello City MSA*	41,464	1,898	4.6	39,566
Bonneville LMA	87,487	3,242	3.7	84,245
Bingham County	23,837	1,074	4.5	22,763
Bonneville County	50,984	1,680	3.3	49,304
Butte County	1,644	52	3.1	1,593
Jefferson County	11,021	436	4.0	10,585
Cassia-Minidoka LMA	19,233	1,477	7.7	17,756
Cassia County	9,642	583	6.0	9,058
Minidoka County	9,592	894	9.3	8,697
Idaho-Lewis LMA	7,730	636	8.2	7,095
Idaho County	6,291	557	8.9	5,734
Lewis County	1,439	78	5.4	1,361
Panhandle LMA	96,389	6,443	6.7	89,946
Benewah County	4,490	474	10.6	4,016
Bonner County	18,629	1,173	6.3	17,456
Boundary County	4,596	304	6.6	4,293
Kootenai County	62,234	3,861	6.2	58,373
Shoshone County	6,440	632	9.8	5,808
Magic Valley LMA	59,340	2,295	3.9	57,045
Gooding County	8,291	299	3.6	7,991
Jerome County	11,056	433	3.9	10,624
Twin Falls County	39,993	1,563	3.9	38,430
Adams County	1,691	262	15.5	1,430
Bear Lake County	3,053	144	4.7	2,909
Blaine County	12,714	499	3.9	12,214
Boise County	2,649	205	7.7	2,444
Camas County	435	23	5.3	412
Caribou County	3,400	249	7.3	3,151
Clark County	660	35	5.3	625
Clearwater County	3,662	381	10.4	3,281
Custer County	1,963	117	5.9	1,847
Elmore County	9,379	606	6.5	8,772
Franklin County	5,460	148	2.7	5,311
Fremont County	3,909	258	6.6	3,651
Gem County	5,275	339	6.4	4,936
Latah County	16,333	509	3.1	15,823
Lemhi County	3,859	243	6.3	3,617
Lincoln County	2,057	106	5.1	1,951
Madison County	12,033	197	1.6	11,835
Oneida County	1,849	42	2.3	1,807
Owyhee County	4,757	86	1.8	4,672
Payette County	9,370	710	7.6	8,660
Power County	3,116	258	8.3	2,858
Teton County	4,069	136	3.4	3,933
Valley County	4,292	288	6.7	4,004
Washington County	4,139	414	10.0	3,725
State of Idaho	706,581	34,604	4.9	671,977
Idaho Cities				
Boise	113,751	4,572	4.0	109,179
Coeur d'Alene	21,966	1,049	4.8	20,916
Idaho Falls	32,205	1,089	3.4	31,115
Lewiston	19,833	596	3.0	19,237
Nampa	21,840	1,450	6.6	20,389
Pocatello	29,714	1,355	4.6	28,359
Twin Falls	20,622	852	4.1	19,770

* Pocatello MSA includes all of Bannock County.

preferring vacation time or the pursuit of non-paid interests. This explains, in part, why the unemployment rate can decrease when more than 6,000 workers lose their education-related jobs.

Positive job gains were recorded by *Professional & Business Services*, which includes the temporary help agencies and the *Leisure & Hospitality* industries. Going into the summer months there was some concern Idaho's tourism industry would be facing some obstacles: high gasoline prices, low water levels for river running and general boating, and drought conditions in forest areas causing many wild fires. Gas prices have been high, water levels dropped, and the forests remained dry (but, luckily, there have been very few fires of significant size), but tourist-related employment has remained strong and above last year's levels. It remains to be seen how the tourist industry fared this summer (other measures include sales taxes and hotel/motel receipts, visitor center usage, Canadian border crossings, etc.), but the employment factor looks good through July.

AGRICULTURE EMPLOYMENT

Drought Update

More than half of the Idaho counties have been declared Drought Emergency areas this summer. The 23 counties are:

These counties cover almost all of southern

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| • Bannock | • Fremont |
| • Bear Lake | • Gooding |
| • Bingham | • Jefferson |
| • Blaine | • Jerome |
| • Bonneville | • Lemhi |
| • Butte | • Lincoln |
| • Caribou | • Madison |
| • Cassia | • Oneida |
| • Clark | • Power |
| • Custer | • Teton |
| • Elmore | • Twin Falls |
| • Franklin | |

Idaho. Exceptions are the southwestern counties on the Payette River and Boise River drainage systems; Owyhee County, which is arid most of the time; and Minidoka County, which is surrounded by drought areas but has advantages of additional runoff from a mountain range on its southern border and underground water sources. Minidoka was one of the first counties to benefit from a very early U.S.

Bureau of Reclamation project—the Minidoka Project. Begun in 1904 with the construction of the Minidoka Dam and its canals and diversions, the project provided water from the Snake River to otherwise arid land for irrigation. Although the project grew to include the headwaters of the Snake River through the river's flow to the town of Bliss and includes five dams, the Minidoka County area was the first development. Water rights apportioned at that time are senior to many others.

EMPLOYMENT

July is the peak month for hiring agricultural workers. There were an estimated 36,680 hired workers on Idaho farms and ranches in July. The weather was dry and temperatures above average for most of the month. Occasional thunderstorms appeared in some areas. These storms brought needed moisture but there downsides as well: lightening is the primary cause of range and forest fires; hay cannot be baled when it is wet; and dampness followed by high temperatures breeds diseases such as potato late blight, or encourages sprouting in wheat. The growing conditions were considered good to excellent most of the time and the average days suitable for fieldwork were 6.7-6.9 per week.

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State Table 2: Nonfarm Payroll Jobs

BY PLACE OF WORK	% Change From				
	Jul 2004*	Jun 2004	Jul 2003	Last Month	Last Year
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	590,800	593,100	575,000	-0.4	2.7
GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES	109,100	107,000	105,600	2.0	3.3
Natural Resources & Mining	4,300	4,000	4,100	7.5	4.9
Logging	2,400	2,100	2,100	14.3	14.3
Mining	1,900	1,900	2,000	0.0	-5.0
Metal Ore Mining	500	500	500	0.0	0.0
Construction	43,300	41,600	39,400	4.1	9.9
Manufacturing	61,500	61,400	62,100	0.2	-1.0
Durable Goods	38,400	38,100	38,000	0.8	1.1
Wood Product Manufacturing	7,400	7,300	7,100	1.4	4.2
Sawmills & Wood Preservation	3,100	3,000	3,000	3.3	3.3
Veneer & Engineered Products	1,200	1,300	1,200	-7.7	0.0
Other Wood Product Manufacturing	3,100	3,000	2,900	3.3	6.9
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	3,500	3,500	3,600	0.0	-2.8
Machinery Manufacturing	2,700	2,700	2,700	0.0	0.0
Computer & Electronic Product Manufacturing	17,000	16,900	16,300	0.6	4.3
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	2,200	2,200	2,100	0.0	4.8
Other Durable Goods	5,600	5,500	6,200	1.8	-9.7
Nondurable Goods	23,100	23,300	24,100	-0.9	-4.1
Food Manufacturing	15,300	15,500	15,800	-1.3	-3.2
Fruits & Vegetable Preserving & Specialty	7,400	7,300	8,100	1.4	-8.6
Paper Manufacturing	1,600	1,600	1,600	0.0	0.0
Printing & Related Support Activities	1,900	1,900	2,000	0.0	-5.0
Chemical Manufacturing	1,800	1,800	1,900	0.0	-5.3
Other Nondurable Goods	2,500	2,500	2,800	0.0	-10.7
SERVICE-PROVIDING INDUSTRIES	481,700	486,100	469,400	-0.9	2.6
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	117,700	118,000	115,400	-0.3	2.0
Trade	98,600	98,900	96,900	-0.3	1.8
Wholesale Trade	24,500	24,600	24,300	-0.4	0.8
Wholesalers, Durable Goods	11,200	11,300	11,100	-0.9	0.9
Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	11,000	11,100	11,200	-0.9	-1.8
Retail Trade	74,100	74,300	72,600	-0.3	2.1
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	11,200	11,100	11,000	0.9	1.8
Building Material and Garden Equipment	8,600	8,700	8,100	-1.1	6.2
Food & Beverage Stores	12,300	12,400	12,500	-0.8	-1.6
General Merchandise Stores	15,300	15,200	14,700	0.7	4.1
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	19,100	19,100	18,500	0.0	3.2
Utilities	1,900	1,900	1,900	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	17,200	17,200	16,600	0.0	3.6
Rail Transportation	1,200	1,200	1,200	0.0	0.0
Truck Transportation	8,700	8,600	8,100	1.2	7.4
Information	9,400	9,400	9,200	0.0	2.2
Telecommunications	3,400	3,400	3,100	0.0	9.7
Financial Activities	27,700	27,400	27,500	1.1	0.7
Finance & Insurance	20,300	20,400	20,200	-0.5	0.5
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	7,400	7,000	7,300	5.7	1.4
Professional & Business Services	76,100	75,700	70,900	0.5	7.3
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	30,200	30,100	28,900	0.3	4.5
Scientific Research & Development	7,300	7,300	7,500	0.0	-2.7
Management of Companies & Enterprises	7,500	7,400	7,300	1.4	2.7
Administrative & Support & Waste Management	38,400	38,200	34,700	0.5	10.7
Administrative & Support Services	37,200	37,000	33,600	0.5	10.7
Educational & Health Services	63,200	63,300	61,800	-0.2	2.3
Educational Services	5,700	6,200	5,600	-8.1	1.8
Health Care & Social Assistance	57,500	57,100	56,200	0.7	2.3
Hospitals	13,300	13,300	13,300	0.0	0.0
Leisure & Hospitality	59,900	58,000	58,200	3.3	2.9
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	9,300	8,600	9,300	8.1	0.0
Accommodation & Food Services	50,600	49,400	48,900	2.4	3.5
Accommodation	9,300	8,500	8,700	9.4	6.9
Food Services & Drinking Places	41,300	40,900	40,200	1.0	2.7
Other Services	19,100	18,700	18,700	2.1	2.1
Total Government	108,600	115,600	107,700	-6.1	0.8
Federal Government	15,600	15,300	15,300	2.0	2.0
State & Local Government	93,000	100,300	92,400	-7.3	0.6
State Government	28,500	28,400	27,100	0.4	5.2
State Government Education	11,400	11,500	11,600	-0.9	-1.7
State Government Administration	17,100	16,900	15,500	1.2	10.3
Local Government	64,500	71,900	65,300	-10.3	-1.2
Local Government Education	29,900	35,900	29,400	-16.7	1.7
Local Government Administration	31,600	33,200	32,900	-4.8	-4.0
Local Government Tribes	3,000	2,800	3,000	7.1	0.0

*Preliminary Estimate

** Estimates include all full or part time wage and salary workers who worked or received pay in the following industry groups during the pay period ending nearest the 12th of the month.

State Table 3: Economic Indicators

	Jul 2004	Jun 2004	Jul 2003	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
IDAHO LABOR FORCE ⁽¹⁾					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	706,600	705,900	693,800	0.1	1.8
Unemployment	34,600	35,300	38,800	-2.0	-10.8
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	4.9	5.0	5.6		
Total Employment	672,000	670,600	655,000	0.2	2.6
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	718,100	717,000	704,900	0.2	1.9
Unemployment	31,600	31,900	35,300	-0.9	-10.5
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	4.4	4.4	5.0		
Total Employment	686,500	685,100	669,600	0.2	2.5
U. S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ⁽²⁾					
	5.5	5.6	6.2		
U.S. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX ⁽²⁾					
Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers (CPI-W)	184.9	185.3	179.6	-0.2	3.0
All Urban Consumer (CPI-U)	189.4	189.7	183.9	-0.2	3.0
AGRICULTURE					
Agriculture Employment	46,780	44,480	46,760	5.2	0.0
Operators	9,740	9,740	9,010	0.0	8.1
Unpaid Family	360	360	360	0.0	0.0
Hired Workers	36,680	34,380	37,390	6.7	-1.9
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE					
Claims Activities					
Initial Claims ⁽³⁾	6,745	7,459	10,692	-9.6	-36.9
Weeks Claimed ⁽⁴⁾	45,247	58,298	78,289	-22.4	-42.2
Benefit Payment Activities⁽⁵⁾					
Weeks Compensated	37,234	48,396	77,162	-23.1	-51.7
Total Benefit \$ Paid	\$7,783,198	\$10,178,511	\$16,895,210	-23.5	-53.9
Average Weekly Benefit Amount	\$209.03	\$210.32	\$218.96	-0.6	-4.5
Covered Employers	42,901	42,460	41,164	1.0	4.2
Total Benefit \$ Paid During Last 12 Months ⁽⁴⁾	\$181,454,794	\$190,566,806	\$215,477,279	-4.8	-15.8

(1) Preliminary Estimate

(2) Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

(3) Includes all entitlements/programs on Intrastate and Interstate Agent, New, and Additional Claims

(4) Includes all entitlements/programs, Intrastate and Interstate Agent

(5) Includes all entitlements/programs, Total Liable Activities



PANHANDLE

BENEWAH, BONNER, BOUNDARY, KOOTENAI, & SHOSHONE COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

As the Panhandle economy continued to expand, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell from 6.8 percent in June to 6.7 percent in July. That's considerably lower than the rate of 8.3 percent in July 2003. As job opportunities began expanding last winter, the unemployment rate began to fall. By February, it fell below 7.0 percent for the first time since the summer of 1990.

The *Nonfarm Payroll* jobs data in Panhandle Table 1 shows the Panhandle added 3,030 jobs between July 2003 and July 2004. Even industries that were depressed throughout the previous three years added jobs. *Natural Resources & Mining* emerged from its depression and added 80 jobs during the 12-month period as Silver Valley mines expanded and logging employment grew. *Construction* employment rose above last year's record highs, providing 220 more jobs this July than July 2003. *Wood Products Manufacturing* added jobs in the first half of 2004, offsetting half of the jobs lost when the Bonners Ferry mill closed and a Stimson mill in Coeur d'Alene laid off a shift in the second half of 2003. Employment in *Other Manufacturing* industries rose to an all-time high of 4,490 in July, and many Panhandle manufacturers plan to add jobs in the next few months.

Professional & Business Services added 720 jobs—more than any other sector—because the new Verizon directory-assistance center opened in February. Temporary employment agencies greatly expanded their staffing as the economy picked up, corporate headquarters increased employment, and a booming construction market kept architects, surveyors, and engineers busy.

Tourism also has performed extremely well in 2004. The Idaho Tax Commission's travel and convention tax report showed hotel-motel receipts

Panhandle Table 1: Labor Force & Employment

	Jul 2004*	Jun 2004	Jul 2003	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	96,390	96,170	93,030	0.2	3.6
Unemployed	6,440	6,560	7,680	-1.8	-16.1
% of Labor Force Unemployed	6.7	6.8	8.3		
Total Employment	89,950	89,610	85,350	0.4	5.4
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	98,310	97,500	94,510	0.8	4.0
Unemployed	5,040	5,340	5,960	-5.6	-15.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.1	5.5	6.3		
Total Employment	93,270	92,160	88,550	1.2	5.3
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	75,100	74,260	72,070	1.1	4.2
Goods-Producing Industries	14,620	13,970	14,220	4.7	2.8
Natural Resources & Mining	1,600	1,460	1,520	9.6	5.3
Construction	5,780	5,310	5,560	8.9	4.0
Manufacturing	7,240	7,200	7,140	0.6	1.4
Wood Product Manufacturing	2,750	2,740	2,850	0.4	-3.5
Other Manufacturing	4,490	4,460	4,290	0.7	4.7
Service-Providing Industries	60,480	60,290	57,850	0.3	4.5
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	14,150	14,090	13,560	0.4	4.4
Wholesale Trade	1,420	1,440	1,390	-1.4	2.2
Retail Trade	10,940	10,890	10,450	0.5	4.7
Utilities	400	400	390	0.0	2.6
Transportation & Warehousing	1,390	1,360	1,330	2.2	4.5
Information	1,190	1,180	1,100	0.8	8.2
Financial Activities	3,180	3,120	2,990	1.9	6.4
Professional & Business Services	7,450	7,260	6,730	2.6	10.7
Educational & Health Services	7,240	7,150	6,910	1.3	4.8
Leisure & Hospitality	10,510	9,870	10,170	6.5	3.3
Other Services	2,530	2,380	2,410	6.3	5.0
Government Education	3,970	4,990	3,900	-20.4	1.8
Government Administration	8,980	9,000	8,860	-0.2	1.4
Government Tribes	1,280	1,250	1,220	2.4	4.9

* Preliminary estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

in the Panhandle rose to \$54.5 million this summer (June through August)—9.9 percent higher than last summer, which was the previous record holder. So, it's not surprising that *Leisure & Hospitality* employed 340 more people this July than last July. In addition, most of the 60 jobs added by the Coeur d'Alene and Kootenai Tribes occurred at their inns and casinos in Worley and Bonners Ferry.

More tourists, growing populations, rising incomes, the spring opening of Costco in Coeur d'Alene, and the continued expansion of Dave Smith Motors in Kellogg boosted *Retail Trade* employment by 490 jobs over the 12-month period. Those job gains are especially appreciated because *Retail Trade* did not add jobs from the fall of 1999 until the fall of 2003.

This year increasingly resembles 1997, the last year that all major industrial sectors in the Panhandle grew and all five counties added jobs. Rough estimates show all five counties had better-than-average growth rates. Of the 3,030 *Nonfarm Payroll* jobs added between July 2003 and July 2004, Benewah County added an estimated 110 jobs for a 3.1 percent increase in *Nonfarm Payroll* jobs. Bonner County added 460 jobs for a 3.6 percent increase; Boundary County, 80 jobs for 2.9 percent; Kootenai County, 2,170 jobs for 4.5 percent; and Shoshone County, 190 jobs for 4.3 percent.

Another similarity between 1997 and 2004 is the rapid rate of job growth. Between July 2003 and July 2004, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* grew 4.2 percent—more than twice as fast as its average rate of growth of 1.9 percent per year from 1998 through 2003. In addition, 1997 was the last year that the Panhandle's *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* grew at rates faster than 2.5 percent a year.

A view of the road ahead suggests the rate of job growth will remain high in the next 12 months. This fall, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway is opening its locomotive-refueling depot near Hauser Lake with 55 employees, and Center Partners is hiring 300 more people for its call centers in Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls, bringing its total employment above 800. This winter U.S. Bank will open a call center that will initially employ about 150 people in Coeur d'Alene. Buck Knives will open a manufacturing plant that will employ more than 200 people in Post Falls, Sysco will open a distribution center that will employ 150 or more people in Post Falls, and Home Depot is expected to open a store employing more than 120 people in Sandpoint.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Benewah County

- Benewah Medical Center, the community hospital in St. Maries, opened its new surgery in August, marking the completion of the first phase of a \$1.6 million construction project. The second phase—construction of a nurse's station and renovation of the old surgery—will begin soon.

Bonner County

- Coldwater Creek, the 20-year-old catalog company based in the Sandpoint area, is in expansion mode. Coldwater will open 49 retail stores across the U.S. in 2004, bringing its total number of stores to 115. In August, Coldwater introduced a new clothing line—women's casual and sportswear.
- Coldwater plans to add 60 jobs at its headquarters this year, bringing its total employment in Bonner County to 385. It also employs about 350 people at its call center in Kootenai County. CEO Dennis

Pence says he expects its Bonner County employment to rise above 500 jobs in a few years.

- Coldwater currently has 60,000-square feet of office space under construction in its former distribution center on its headquarters campus in Kootenai, three miles northeast of Sandpoint. When the construction is completed, the campus will contain 177,000-square feet of office space. Work soon will begin on an 8,000-square-foot training facility there.
- Sandpoint has been spending a lot of time in the national spotlight this year. In January, *Sunset* magazine named Sandpoint as the best small town to live in. In August, *Outside* magazine featured Sandpoint on its list of dream towns, *Forbes* magazine named Sandpoint as a telecommuting heaven, and *National Geographic Adventure* magazine named Sandpoint as one of the 10 "great adventure" towns. All this attention led to even more focus, when the *USA Today* newspaper wrote an article about Sandpoint describing it as "a Norman Rockwell-meets-Ansel Adams classic" and described the area's rapid growth resulting from the articles. Phones have been ringing off the hook at the Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce and local realtors all year long as people ask about visiting, moving to, or buying vacation or retirement homes there. One result of all this attention was a doubling of the cost of waterfront property during the last two years. Some Sandpoint residents are increasingly concerned about the affordability of housing.

Boundary County

- The Boundary County Airport recently received a \$1.1 million grant to build a taxiway to increase safety and efficiency. It will also increase capacity for the additional airport traffic that has been growing. In addition, the airport is preparing for the multi-million dollar building that the U.S. Border Patrol eventually plans to construct at the airport.
- Eddie Madden Sr. and his wife Kirsten celebrated the grand opening of the Last Chance Saloon September 1. The bar is located in the former Jack's Club beneath the American Legion in downtown Bonners Ferry. Live bands entertain on Friday and Saturday nights, while brave customers entertain via karaoke on Wednesday nights.
- Jill Nystrom opened Jill's Café at the corner of Main and Bonner Streets in Bonners Ferry in early

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SEAPORT

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO: CLEARWATER, IDAHO, LATAH, LEWIS, & NEZ PERCE COUNTIES

LABOR FORCE TRENDS

The Seaport seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in July remained at the June rate of 4.0 percent, as shown in Seaport Table 1. In July 2003 the rate was 4.6 percent. The Seaport's *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* in July 2004 increased by 150 jobs from the previous month. Most of the employment increase occurred because of increased activity in *Construction*. Both sectors of *Construction*, residential and industrial, increased during the month. Though *Construction* increased in July, employment totals for the industry were still below July 2003.

SPECIAL TOPIC:

Unemployment Insurance

Besides helping unemployed individuals and families transition from one job to another, unemployment insurance (UI) acts as an automatic economic stabilizer. When a business has to lay an employee off, UI benefits offset some of the effects of the job loss on the worker and, in the case of major layoffs, on a community's spending power. UI also promotes stability by making it possible for employers to retain workers during the off-season or a short downturn. Many seasonal industries would find it much more difficult to attract and retain employees if their workers could not rely on UI benefits to help support them through the off-season. In North Central Idaho, \$10,873,815 was paid out in UI benefits for the fiscal year ending June 2004,

Seaport Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Nez Perce County, Idaho and Asotin County, Washington

	Jul 2004*	Jun 2004	Jul 2003	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	35,580	35,210	35,770	1.1	-0.5
Unemployment	1,420	1,400	1,630	1.4	-12.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.0	4.0	4.6		
Total Employment	34,160	33,810	34,140	1.0	0.1
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	35,500	35,230	35,690	0.8	-0.5
Unemployment	1,310	1,300	1,470	0.8	-10.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.7	3.7	4.1		
Total Employment	34,190	33,930	34,220	0.8	-0.1
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	26,170	26,020	26,790	0.6	-2.3
Goods-Producing Industries	4,650	4,540	4,860	2.4	-4.3
Natural Resources & Mining	220	230	240	-4.3	-8.3
Construction	1,260	1,160	1,370	8.6	-8.0
Manufacturing	3,170	3,150	3,250	0.6	-2.5
Wood Product Manufacturing	550	560	520	-1.8	5.8
Food Manufacturing	290	250	270	16.0	7.4
Paper Manufacturing	1,190	1,190	1,170	0.0	1.7
Other Manufacturing	1,140	1,150	1,290	-0.9	-11.6
Service-Providing Industries	21,520	21,480	21,930	0.2	-1.9
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	5,470	5,390	5,510	1.5	-0.7
Wholesale Trade	640	630	650	1.6	-1.5
Retail Trade	3,570	3,540	3,580	0.8	-0.3
Utilities	90	90	90	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,170	1,130	1,190	3.5	-1.7
Information	370	370	390	0.0	-5.1
Financial Activities	1,850	1,850	1,860	0.0	-0.5
Professional & Business Services	1,340	1,380	1,440	-2.9	-6.9
Education & Health Services	4,000	4,020	3,990	-0.5	0.3
Leisure & Hospitality	2,480	2,450	2,640	1.2	-6.1
Other Services	1,080	1,060	1,100	1.9	-1.8
Government Education	2,260	2,210	2,120	2.3	6.6
Government Administration	1,860	1,900	2,050	-2.1	-9.3
Government Tribes	810	850	830	-4.7	-2.4

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

Seaport Table 2: Amount of Unemployment Insurance Payments

County	Number of Weeks Paid			Dollar Amount Paid		
	State Fiscal Year			State Fiscal Year		
	2004	2003	Change	2004	2003	Change
Clearwater	8,037	9,758	-1,721	\$1,905,101	\$2,301,314	-\$396,213
Idaho	12,357	13,757	-1,400	\$2,719,487	\$3,068,135	-\$348,648
Latah	10,169	12,578	-2,409	\$2,351,359	\$2,978,774	-\$627,415
Lewis	644	1,033	-389	\$132,951	\$210,411	-\$77,460
Nez Perce	17,604	19,087	-1,483	\$3,764,917	\$4,105,997	-\$341,080
Total North Central Idaho	48,811	56,213	-7,402	\$10,873,815	\$12,664,631	-\$1,790,816

down \$1,790,816 from 2003. For a breakdown of dollars paid and numbers of weeks paid in the region in 2002 and 2003, see Seaport Table 2 on page 9.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Idaho and Lewis Counties

- Bennett Forest Industries (BFI) has announced it will be moving its Elk City sawmill to Grangeville. BFI already has a planing and shipping facility in Grangeville, and will upgrade and expand facilities to accommodate the new sawmill. BFI officials cited the need to improve production and to be more centrally located to its available resource base as factors dictating the move. In addition, they tentatively plan to have the Grangeville sawmill fully operational by October 2005. No jobs are expected to be lost. Instead the company estimates 10 to 15 new jobs will be created, but the jobs will be in Grangeville instead of Elk City. No information was available on how many current employees would follow the mill to Grangeville. "This is a step our company has evaluated for several years," stated company CEO Scott Atkison in a prepared release. "We believe it is a necessary change if we are to prosper in the highly competitive lumber industry." Approximately 75 people are employed at the Elk City facility.
- Several businesses have opened recently in Craigmont. Prairietech, a computer repair and video rental business, opened at 19 Main Street. A new branch of the Cottonwood Community Federal Credit Union opened at 221 Main Street in Craigmont. About 25 to 30 percent of the credit union's customers live in the Craigmont area. The new branch offers services such as savings and checking accounts, credit cards, lines of credit, agricultural production loans, and home, business, and car loans. Entrepreneurs are breathing new life into the long-neglected Camas Club and Craigmont Hotel. The group is renovating the historic building and has already opened a restaurant and bar in the building. Renovation of the upstairs hotel rooms, which have been closed for more than 30 years, is ongoing.

Latah County

- Hewlett-Packard, one of the nation's leading computer and printer manufacturers, has awarded a financial grant to the University of Idaho for research that includes technology that could give computers the ability to think like people. "We're looking for the neural network to pos-

sibly facilitate our product development process," said Ken Lindblom, research and development section manager for Hewlett-Packard's Boise operation. Lindblom said the work by a team of Idaho researchers, led by inventor Richard Wells, could speed up research processes. Wells said the neural network project itself could enable computers or robots to make rapid computations of more complex information than scientists believed possible. There already is software being used by some industries to achieve that kind of result, but Wells has provided the first hardware system. A patent is pending on the technology, and Gene Merrell of the Idaho Research Foundation Inc., which oversees university patents and licenses technology, said forming a neural network on a microchip could revolutionize the way computers function.

- The National Institutes of Health is awarding Idaho universities \$16.1 million to build a biomedical research network. The five-year grant is the largest single educational and research grant in state history. It will establish a research network among nine universities and colleges, and two research centers, all within Idaho. University of Idaho (UI) will receive \$5.1 million over five years from the grant. School officials said the network would help the state build a biotechnology industry, keeping Idaho graduates within the state's borders. Under the grant, university and college students will work with researchers on several projects, including studying Alzheimer's disease, viral birth defects, cancer and chemotherapy drugs, and alcohol dependence. The grant will build on the Biomedical Research Infrastructure Network created by UI, Boise State University, and Idaho State University in 2001.

Nez Perce And Asotin (Wa.) Counties

- Potlatch Corporation has announced it is selling oriented strand board (OSB) plants in Grand Rapids, Bemidji and Cook, all in Minnesota, to Ainsworth Lumber Co. Ltd., headquartered in Vancouver, British Columbia. The deal, which is subject to closing conditions such as regulatory clearances, is expected to close by the end of the third quarter. OSB has been the powerhouse in Potlatch's financial recovery that followed three years of losses that ended in 2002. The sale will also help Potlatch move toward its goal of debt reduction by providing it with almost enough

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TREASURE VALLEY

ADA, ADAMS, BOISE, CANYON, ELMORE, GEM, OWYHEE, PAYETTE, VALLEY, & WASHINGTON COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The Boise City Metropolitan Statistical Area's (MSA) seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for July 2004 was 4.6 percent, unchanged from June, as shown in Treasure Valley Table 1. This was eight-tenths of a percent below July 2003's unemployment rate of 5.4 percent and four-tenths of a percentage point above the May 2004 rate of 4.2 percent. Month-over-month the total number of employed persons decreased 1,000 from June 2004, four-tenths of a percent drop in employment. This decrease is seasonal in nature and occurs every year due to schools being out and food manufacturing facilities shutting down temporarily for maintenance work in anticipation of the upcoming harvest season. During July 2004 the *Civilian Labor Force* decreased by 1,000 as did the total number of people employed as mentioned above. Due to the fact that the labor force and employment decreased by the same amount, the unemployment rate remained unchanged between June and July of 2004. Despite the seasonal slowdown in July, there were over 8,000 more jobs in the Treasure Valley in July 2004 than in July 2003. Those 8,000 jobs provided a

Treasure Valley Table 2: July 2004 Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Figures for Southwest Idaho Counties				
	Civilian Labor Force	Number Unem- ployed	Percent Unem- ployed	Number Employed
Ada	179,915	7,150	4.0	172,765
Adams	1,691	262	15.5	1,430
Boise	2,649	205	7.7	2,444
Canyon	71,593	4,418	6.2	67,175
Elmore	9,379	606	6.5	8,772
Gem	5,275	339	6.4	4,936
Owyhee	4,757	86	1.8	4,672
Payette	9,370	710	7.6	8,660
Valley	4,292	288	6.7	4,004
Washington	4,139	414	10.0	3,725
Statewide	706,581	34,604	4.9	671,977

Treasure Valley Table 1: Boise MSA Labor Force & Employment
Ada and Canyon Counties

	Jul 2004*	Jun 2004	Jul 2003	% Change	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	251,500	252,500	245,000	-0.4	2.7
Unemployment	11,600	11,600	13,200	0.0	-12.1
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.6	4.6	5.4		
Total Employment	239,900	240,900	231,800	-0.4	3.5
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	255,200	256,100	248,700	-0.4	2.6
Unemployment	11,600	11,400	13,200	1.8	-12.1
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.5	4.4	5.3		
Total Employment	243,600	244,700	235,500	-0.4	3.4
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**					
GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES	47,900	47,800	45,700	0.2	4.8
Natural Resources & Construction	17,500	17,300	16,100	1.2	8.7
Manufacturing	30,400	30,500	29,600	-0.3	2.7
Durable Goods	23,700	23,700	22,500	0.0	5.3
Wood Product Manufacturing	1,700	1,700	1,700	0.0	0.0
Fabricated Metal Products Mfg.	1,400	1,400	1,400	0.0	0.0
Machinery Manufacturing	1,100	1,100	1,200	0.0	-8.3
Computer & Electronic Manufacturing	15,300	15,100	14,500	1.3	5.5
Transportation Equipment Mfg.	1,500	1,600	1,600	-6.3	-6.3
Other Durable Goods	2,700	2,800	2,100	-3.6	28.6
Nondurable Goods	6,700	6,800	7,100	-1.5	-5.6
Food Manufacturing	4,900	5,100	5,300	-3.9	-7.5
Printing & Related Support Activities	700	700	700	0.0	0.0
Other Nondurable Goods	1,100	1,000	1,100	10.0	0.0
SERVICE-PROVIDING INDUSTRIES	189,100	190,900	182,200	-0.9	3.8
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	45,700	45,600	43,700	0.2	4.6
Trade	38,600	38,400	36,900	0.5	4.6
Wholesale Trade	10,400	10,200	10,100	2.0	3.0
Wholesalers, Durable Goods	6,300	6,400	6,300	-1.6	0.0
Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	2,800	2,800	2,900	0.0	-3.4
Retail Trade	28,200	28,200	26,800	0.0	5.2
Food & Beverage Stores	4,500	4,500	4,200	0.0	7.1
General Merchandise Stores	6,200	6,200	5,800	0.0	6.9
All Other Retail Trade	17,500	17,500	16,800	0.0	4.2
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	7,100	7,200	6,800	-1.4	4.4
Utilities	600	600	600	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	6,500	6,600	6,200	-1.5	4.8
Information	4,200	4,100	3,900	2.4	7.7
Telecommunications	1,500	1,500	1,400	0.0	7.1
Financial Activities	13,100	13,100	12,500	0.0	4.8
Finance & Insurance	9,600	9,700	9,200	-1.0	4.3
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	3,500	3,400	3,300	2.9	6.1
Professional & Business Services	34,700	34,500	32,100	0.6	8.1
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	10,800	10,800	10,200	0.0	5.9
Management of Companies & Ent.	5,600	5,600	5,600	0.0	0.0
Administrative & Support & Waste Mgmt.	18,300	18,100	16,300	1.1	12.3
Educational & Health Services	29,100	29,500	28,300	-1.4	2.8
Educational Services	1,100	1,600	2,000	-31.3	-45.0
Health Care & Social Assistance	28,000	27,900	26,300	0.4	6.5
Hospitals	9,600	9,600	9,300	0.0	3.2
Leisure & Hospitality	21,700	21,700	20,800	0.0	4.3
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	3,200	3,200	3,200	0.0	0.0
Accommodation & Food Services	18,500	18,500	17,600	0.0	5.1
Accommodation	2,200	2,200	2,100	0.0	4.8
Food Services & Drinking Places	16,300	16,300	15,500	0.0	5.2
Other Services	7,000	7,000	6,800	0.0	2.9
Total Government	33,600	35,400	34,100	-5.1	-1.5
Federal Government	5,900	5,900	5,600	0.0	5.4
State & Local Government	27,700	29,500	28,500	-6.1	-2.8
State Government	12,300	12,300	12,800	0.0	-3.9
State Government Education	3,100	3,100	3,400	0.0	-8.8
State Government Administration	9,200	9,200	9,400	0.0	-2.1
Local Government	15,400	17,200	15,700	-10.5	-1.9
Local Government Education	9,100	10,900	9,600	-16.5	-5.2
Local Government Administration	6,300	6,300	6,100	0.0	3.3

* Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

growth rate of 3.4 percent in total employment from year ago levels. Also, the number of unemployed persons decreased by 1,600 from one year ago which is a 12.1 percent decrease in the number of unemployed persons in the Treasure Valley. The *Civilian Labor Force* increased over the past year by 6,500 people while the number of persons employed increased by 8,100 during the same time period, as Treasure Valley Table 1 on page 11 shows, and as long as employment growth outpaces labor force growth, the unemployment rate will drop. The *Civilian Labor Force* figures for July 2004 for all ten counties in Southwest Idaho are shown in Treasure Valley Table 2 on page 11.

During July 2004, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* in the Boise MSA decreased by 1,700 jobs—a .7 percent drop from June 2004. From July 2003 to July 2004, however, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* grew by 9,100—a large number of new jobs—for a growth rate of 4.0 percent.

Month-over-month, *Goods-Producing Industries* grew by 100 jobs. *Natural Resources, Mining & Construction* experienced the most growth in the super sector, increasing by 200 jobs from June. *Manufacturing*, experienced a decline of 100 jobs from June to July, but from July 2003 the sector added 800 new jobs. The employment loss from June to July 2004 in *Manufacturing* occurred in *Nondurable Goods*. This is a seasonal occurrence in this sector due to production shutdowns at the food processing plants in the Treasure Valley for maintenance work. Once the plants finish processing last year's crop these facilities will temporarily lay off a portion of their workforce until the current years' crops become available for processing.

From June to July 2004, the *Service-Providing Industries* experienced large employment losses of 1,800 jobs occurring entirely in *Local Government Education*. Though losses were experienced in other sectors of the *Service-Providing Industries*, gains occurring in other sectors sufficiently offset any losses. *Trade, Transportation & Utilities* grew by 100 jobs in July 2004 and by 2,000 jobs since July 2003. The increase in *Trade, Transportation & Utilities* occurred entirely in the *Wholesale Trade* sector. No changes were seen in *Retail Trade* and a 100-job loss occurred in *Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities*. The *Information* sector of the *Service-Providing Industries* grew by 100 jobs, while the *Financial Activities* industries experienced offsetting gains and losses in *Finance & Insurance* and *Real Estate Rental & Leasing*. *Professional & Business Services* grew by 200 new jobs, entirely from the *Administrative, Support, & Waste Management* sector, as employment agencies continue to see increased activity compared to year ago levels. *Educational & Health Services* dropped from June to July by 400 jobs due to schools closing for the summer, but *Health Care & Social Assistance* continued to grow, increasing by 100 from June 2004 and by 1,700 jobs from July 2003, a year-over-year employment growth of 6.5 percent.

As was mentioned previously, the *Government* sector of the *Service-Providing Industries* is entirely responsible for the July 2004 decline in *Total Nonfarm Payroll Jobs*.

Most sectors in *Government* remained unchanged from June to July 2004 with the exception of *Local Government Education*. Again, this is a seasonal drop that occurs each year and within the next two months is expected to increase as quickly as it decreased when schools reopen.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Boise City MSA

- Shadow Hills Square is a proposed retail, office and apartment project to be located on the north side of State Street just west of Gary Lane in Boise. The \$22 million project should be completed in five phases and was scheduled to start in late summer. The first phase consists of tearing down existing buildings and constructing a new road. Bidding for construction of the new road is underway.
- Construction permit valuations are down in Ada County by 14 percent so far in 2004 compared with 2003's values through the first six months of the year. Projects gaining permits for 2004 total an estimated \$162.7 million compared with \$188.1 million in 2003. However, permits for commercial additions, alterations, and repairs was up by 17 percent to \$5.74 million.
- Casa Mexico, which has four locations in the Treasure Valley, is planning a fifth in Middleton. Construction on the new restaurant was scheduled to start in August and to be open by November. The new restaurant will employ about 15 people adding to Casa Mexico's approximately 60 existing employees.
- Cartridge World, a new business franchise that refills ink cartridges for printers and remanufactures cartridges for laser printers, has recently opened in Meridian. To refill an ink cartridge the remaining ink inside is withdrawn and cleaned, then the cartridge is refilled. To remanufacture a laser cartridge, it is taken apart, cleaned, and the necessary parts and toner are all replaced. Refilled or remanufactured cartridges cost about half the price of new cartridges and are said to work just as effectively.
- A 50-year lease has been signed with the City of Boise by former silicone valley software engineer Peter Vanek to build a rock climbing gym. The Boise Rock Gym will cost close to \$1 million to build; plans call for it to be open in January. The gym will have a 9,000-square-foot climbing wall and a 43-foot ceiling to go along with it. In addition to the rock wall the Boise Rock Gym will have exercise equipment, a variety of fitness classes, and a gear shop selling climbing accessories and gear.
- Washington Group International (WGI), headquartered in Boise, recently won a contract to design and manage a uranium enrichment plant in New Mexico. The contract is worth \$16 million to WGI, and construction on the plant is scheduled for the fall of 2006.

- The two largest hospitals in the Treasure Valley are planning to hire more healthcare workers in the near and long-term future. St. Lukes Regional Medical Center is planning to hire nurses and nursing support workers among other patient care professionals. St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center plans to hire more workers as well, but in a more varied range of occupations such as therapy services, pharmacy, medical imaging, and service and support. Both hospitals recruit for openings locally, within Idaho, regionally, and nationally.
- In August, Zions Bank announced that it was hiring 22 former employees from Washington Mutual in Idaho who were laid off.
- Meridian will soon accept a \$250,000 grant to assist Louisiana Pacific in expanding its plant located in Meridian. The lumber company plans to add nearly 40 jobs once the expansion is complete.
- Western States Contracting Alliance recently awarded MPC Computers of Nampa (including Dell, Gateway, and Hewlett Packard) a contract from 2004-2007. Six other computer manufacturers who were part of the contract include Dell, Gateway, and Hewlett Packard. The Alliance provides state and local governments, and educational institutions with purchasing abilities for computer systems and other equipment. The \$3 billion three-year contract agreement will allow MPC to expand its marketing operations in approximately 19 new states. MPC's contract began September 1; the company plans to hire a few new employees to handle the state and local government sales, and the educational institution sales.
- Construction activity in Meridian had another record month in July. Single-family housing permit values declined by \$2.3 million from June, but the Sagecrest Apartments, valued at \$8.6 million, offset the decline in single-family housing values. Sagecrest Apartment Complex will consist of 48 fourplexes on the southwest corner of Overland and Millennium Way west of Eagle Road.
- WGI recently acquired the last 40 percent of the former Westinghouse government services businesses, a one-time subsidiary of BNFL Inc. With this acquisition, WGI will control the Westinghouse Government Services Co. and the Westinghouse Government Environmental Services Co.
- Boise information technology services and software company CRI Advantage was recently awarded a \$4.3 million contract. The Idaho Department of Education and the J.A. & Kathryn Albertson Foundation provided funding for the award. Under the contract CRI will provide analytics software to all of Idaho's

schools providing teachers with easier access to student information.

Valley County

- Tamarack Resort will be acquiring Life Flight service just in time for the official opening of alpine skiing. Cascade Medical Center, in cooperation with St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center of Boise, has recently announced plans for a resort-based health care clinic and local Life Flight service for guests and area residents, scheduled to open in December. The Life Flight helicopter will be based at the McCall Airport.
- Tamarack Resort will open its alpine ski slopes and related facilities on December 15. There will be 25 downhill runs and five operating chair lifts. Lift ticket prices will be \$55 for adults and \$28 for youth ages 7-17; children ages 6 and under can ski for free. Discounts will be available for military, senior citizens, and college students. In addition to downhill skiing, there will be a full-service Nordic ski park with over 18 miles of trails, over 6 miles of groomed snowshoe trails, and access to hundreds of acres of backcountry skiing opportunities.
- Holland Realty of Boise has opened an office at Village Square in McCall. The McCall office will handle residential, commercial, and investment properties along with construction sales and management. Holland Realty sold over \$500 million in real estate during 2003.

Payette County

- Fruitland based Woodgrain Millwork has recently purchased American Pine Products of Prineville, Oregon. American Pine Products makes pine molding, window frames, door components, specialty millwork, and has a cut stock operation. This purchase has added an additional 500,000-square feet of space and approximately 350 employees to Woodgrain Millwork's business, bringing their total number of employees to over 5,000 in 24 locations in the United States and in South America. The local Fruitland factory currently employs approximately 760 people.

Elmore County

- The Dollar Tree opened a new location in Mountain Home with a grand opening in late August.

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August. The café serves soups, salads, and sandwiches from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Kootenai County

- Kootenai Medical Center (KMC), the hospital in Coeur d'Alene, recently began a \$3.4 million construction project that will double the size of its emergency department and increase lab space by 30 percent when completed by June 2005. In September KMC began construction of a \$5 million parking garage with more than 400 parking spaces. KMC also unveiled a new heart center this year. KMC has added more than 90 jobs since last fall, so it now employs about 1,620 people. KMC is the Panhandle's largest employer; it employs more Panhandle residents than either the federal government (1,460 employees in July) or the state government (1,540).
- The University of Idaho Research Park in Post Falls welcomed BAI Security as its newest tenant in August. Chicago-based BAI Security is a managed security service provider that safeguards the information assets of small to mid-sized organizations. BAI identifies suspicious activities and then takes steps to prevent theft of information or other security breaches. Over the next year, BAI plans to build a sales force of 10 to 12 in Post Falls to serve the western United States. BAI is a good fit for the research park because the University of Idaho is

considered an emerging leader in the research and development of security technology.

- Best Buy Co. plans to open a \$3.5 million, 20,000-square-foot electronics store at 425 Wilson Avenue in Coeur d'Alene. The store, located just north of the mini-mall containing Borders, T.J. Maxx, and Petco, will be accessible from Highway 95. When the first Best Buy store in North Idaho opens this coming spring, it will employ 90 people selling TVs, stereos, DVDs, CDs, entertainment software, and appliances.

Panhandle

- The Idaho Travel Council recently granted nearly \$450,000 to tourism groups in the Panhandle. The recipients and the amounts they received include: the Coeur d'Alene Area Chamber of Commerce, \$262,150; the Greater Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce, \$62,319; North Idaho Tourism Alliance, \$58,468; the Post Falls Chamber of Commerce, \$54,000; the northern chapter of the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association, \$8,000; and the northern chapter of the Idaho RV Campgrounds Association, \$3,000. The money will be used to market Panhandle communities to tourists.

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SEAPORT NEWS — (continued from page 10)

money to meet all of its debt when combined with cash on hand. Potlatch will continue to operate a lumber mill at Bemidji and, as Minnesota's largest private forest landowner, it will manage 320,000 acres of forest lands.

- An agreement has been reached between Delta Air Lines, the City of Lewiston, and Valley Vision (Nez Perce & Asotin Counties' economic development organization) for a Delta Connection carrier such as SkyWest, to provide four flights a day on a 50-passenger jet. Two daily round-trip nonstop flights from Lewiston to Salt Lake City are expected to begin a one-year trial starting February 1. The agreement guarantees Delta or a subsidiary will get as

much as \$3,500 per flight, with the amount reduced depending on the number of seats sold. The money is provided by a federal Department of Transportation Small Community Air Service Development Grant awarded to the city a year ago. Salt Lake City, which is only 80 minutes away, is a hub with connections available to the Midwest, East Coast, and southern cities.

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MAGIC VALLEY

BLAINE, CAMAS, CASSIA, GOODING, JEROME, LINCOLN, MINIDOKA, & TWIN FALLS COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The July 2004 seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.9 percent for the Magic Valley Labor Market Area as shown in Table 1. This was unchanged from July 2003, but was three-tenths of a percentage point lower than in June 2004. The *Civilian Labor Force* in July 2004 was 7.9 percent higher than in July 2003 and 2.0 percent higher than in June 2004. Total employment increased by 4,190 persons year-over-year.

Nearly every sector showed an increase from June to July 2004. The most dramatic of these increases was in the *Construction* sector that gained a huge 68.9 percent year-over-year. The reason for this is numerous construction projects in and around the Twin Falls area. The City of Twin Falls had new records for housing starts in 2002 and 2003. Domestic housing, along with major road, business, and office complex construction, have created several new construction jobs. With several major businesses coming into the area, it appears that construction will continue to remain strong through 2004 and into 2005.

Other sectors that had strong growth year-over-year were *Retail Trade*, *Utilities*, and *Information* with increases of 9.4 percent, 12.5 percent, and 14.3 percent, respectively. Other sectors were positive as well. Consumer confidence remains very high in the area as unemployment has stayed at or below 4.0 percent most of the year. Strong dairy prices have helped that industry rebound from last year's low prices and maintain employment stability of, in some cases, continue growing. As a result of an overall strong economy, market-driven sectors such as retail and services have continued to experience steady growth. With the opening of the new store Tuesday Morning and the anticipated construction of a new Lowe's store in 2005, it appears that several new retail jobs will be created. Over the past two years, ten new major retailers have located in the area and the

Magic Valley Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Twin Falls, Jerome, and Gooding Counties

	Jul 2004*	Jun 2004	Jul 2003	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	59,110	57,970	54,780	2.0	7.9
Unemployment	2,300	2,420	2,160	-5.0	6.5
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.9	4.2	3.9		
Total Employment	56,810	55,550	56,620	2.3	8.0
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	60,360	58,690	55,360	2.8	9.0
Unemployment	2,420	2,230	1,990	8.5	21.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.0	3.8	3.6		
Total Employment	57,940	56,460	53,370	2.6	8.6
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	46,440	45,520	43,480	2.0	6.8
Goods-Providing Industries	9,310	8,050	7,590	15.7	22.7
Natural Resources & Mining	20	20	20	0.0	0.0
Construction	3,970	2,900	2,350	36.9	68.9
Manufacturing	5,320	5,130	5,220	3.7	1.9
Food Manufacturing	3,710	3,690	3,590	0.5	3.3
Other Manufacturing	1,610	1,440	1,630	11.8	-1.2
Service-Providing Industries	37,130	37,470	35,890	-0.9	3.5
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	10,880	10,950	10,100	-0.6	7.7
Wholesale Trade	1,960	1,950	1,870	0.5	4.8
Retail Trade	6,770	6,710	6,190	0.9	9.4
Utilities	270	270	240	0.0	12.5
Transportation & Warehousing	1,880	2,020	1,800	-6.9	4.4
Information	560	510	490	9.8	14.3
Financial Activities	1,770	1,780	1,720	-0.6	2.9
Professional & Business Services	6,070	6,130	6,460	-1.0	-6.0
Educational & Health Services	3,830	3,900	3,690	-1.8	3.8
Leisure & Hospitality	3,690	3,780	3,610	-2.4	2.2
Other Services	1,520	1,500	1,490	1.3	2.0
Government Education	4,230	4,360	3,890	-3.0	8.7
Government Administration	4,580	4,560	4,440	0.4	3.2

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

outflow of consumers going to Boise to shop has lessened. Twin Falls is expanding upon its role as the retail and service hub of South Central Idaho and northern Nevada.

In agriculture, a great deal depends on the water situation. This is the fifth straight year of below normal water, and some irrigation districts have either suspended service during certain times or have stopped delivery early. Last April, a serious water curtailment situation arose when the Idaho Department of Water Resources sent a letter to many groundwater users in South Central Idaho that would have curtailed 26,500-acre-feet of water. This crisis was averted and a committee was formed to formulate an equitable water plan to send to the Legislature. A tentative plan for water mitigation has been formulated and, if approved, would help considerably in the effort to recharge the Snake River Aquifer and keep enough water

available for the future. Commodity prices were average to good this season and most crops were excellent. However, if the 2004-2005 water year is below normal, both surface irrigators and groundwater users may be critically short of water, forcing possible liquidation or changes in the crop rotation toward crops with a shorter growing season. This is a serious concern to dairy farmers as well since they are major ground water users. If serious water curtailment is necessary, the impact to the Magic Valley economy will be immense.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

South Central Idaho

- Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne announced the awarding of seven grants totaling \$418,092 for water projects that will save over 20,000 acre-feet of water in the Magic Valley each year. These funds are from the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer Mitigation Program. The grants went to Buckeye Ditch Company (\$19,370) to line and seal a high loss ditch, mitigating 1,450-acre-feet a year. Buckeye Farms, Inc. received \$184,005 to install a pumping plant and pipeline, mitigating 11,600-acre-feet per year. Canyon Springs Golf Course and Fish Farm received \$23,090 to install a pump back system, mitigating 2,600-acre-feet a year. Clear Springs Food received \$76,752 to construct a pump back system, mitigating 2,900-acre-feet per year. Fisheries Development Company received \$77,500 to reroute a pipeline system, mitigating 1,450-acre-feet a year. Finally, Rangen, Inc. received \$37,375 to modify pipeline and install a pump, mitigating 185 acre-feet per year.
- The Idaho Travel Council awarded \$208,337 to various agencies in South Central Idaho. The organizations will use the funds to find promotional programs designed to market cities, towns, or regions as a tourism destination. Program elements include print and electronic advertising, brochures, travel shows, direct mail campaigns, and industry research and creation of Web sites. Of the total amount awarded, South Central Idaho Recreation Tourism & Development Association (SCIRTD) received \$103,037, Twin Falls Chamber of Commerce received \$85,500, Idaho Outfitters and Guide Association-South Central Chapter received \$8,800, and Idaho RV Campgrounds Association-South Central Chapter received \$11,000.

Twin Falls County

- The Magic Valley Office of Idaho Commerce & Labor held an Open House September 2. Community leaders and others attended the event, which showcased additional services that will be available at local offices because of the merger that formed Idaho Commerce & Labor. Discussions and exhibits focused on the extensive labor market information

(LMI) that is available at the agency's Internet website and the positive implications of enhanced economic development efforts because of the merger.

- A new beauty shop, Total Look Salon, has opened in Buhl. Diane Kaminski and Colleen Kinyon are co-owners of the salon, located at 813 Burley Avenue in Buhl. It offers full-service features such as hair stylist and nail technician services, plus facials, body wraps, tanning, and cosmetics. Total Look Salon is open from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Jerome, and Lincoln Counties

- Governor Dirk Kempthorne announced that he is awarding \$500,000 to the City of Jerome for building a new sewer system for St. Benedict's Medical Technology Park at Crossroad Point near Jerome. The technology park will have a 40-plus-bed hospital as well as space for office and technology-oriented businesses. Funding was provided from the Idaho Rural Initiative grant.

Cassia and Minidoka Counties

- The City of Burley signed an agreement in August with the Boyer Company of Utah, which will manage the former J.R. Simplot Plant area in Heyburn and help recruit viable businesses to the Mini-Cassia Industrial Park. Idaho's U.S. Senator Mike Crapo and Roger Madsen, Director of Idaho Commerce & Labor, attended the signing event and both emphasized the positive effect the move will have on economic development efforts of the Mini-Cassia area. Already Gossner Cheese of Logan, Utah, announced its intention to build a new facility in the Mini-Cassia Industrial Park. Groundbreaking will take place this fall and the new plant should be open for operations in October 2005. Gossner will employ over 40 persons, and more than 100 construction jobs will be created as the plant is built. Boyer Company indicated that there were many potential employers and anticipated many new businesses in the area in the next few years. In 2002, the J.R. Simplot Company announced the closure of its potato processing plant in Heyburn. That closure was completed in November 2003. After months of negotiation, the J.R. Simplot Company gifted the property in its entirety to the City of Burley.

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SOUTHEAST IDAHO

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA, & POWER COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

In July, school employment falls and summer agricultural, construction, and recreation activity grows. Since summer seasonal activity did not outpace the loss of school jobs, the Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area's (MSA) seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was unchanged at 4.6 percent in July 2004 from June 2004. Five times in the past 25 years, the area's unemployment rate has shown no change between June and July. The rate has increased 13 times and decreased seven times and the fluctuation usually depends on when schools close. The MSA's unemployment rate in July was three-tenths of a percentage point lower than the state rate of 4.9 percent and nine-tenths of a percentage point lower than the U.S. rate of 5.5 percent.

Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates fluctuated little between June and July 2004 in most Southeast Idaho counties. Caribou County had the largest rate of change of all counties, as shown in Southeast Idaho Table 2. Caribou County's unemployment rate fell six-tenths of a percentage point from June to July because the number of unemployed individuals fell by 28. The only other county to experience a large rate change was Power County, which increased 1.9 percent between

Southeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Pocatello City MSA (Bannock County)

	Jul 2004*	Jun 2004	Jul 2003	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	41,470	41,280	40,530	0.5	2.3
Unemployment	1,900	1,880	2,110	1.1	-10.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.6	4.6	5.2		
Total Employment	39,570	39,400	38,420	0.4	3.0
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	40,170	40,660	39,270	-1.2	2.3
Unemployment	1,800	1,750	1,990	2.9	-9.5
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.5	4.3	5.1		
Total Employment	38,370	38,910	37,280	-1.4	2.9
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	32,760	33,450	32,080	-2.1	2.1
Goods-Producing Industries	4,220	4,170	4,300	1.2	-1.9
Natural Resources & Mining	10	10	10	0.0	0.0
Construction	1,710	1,650	1,710	3.6	0.0
Manufacturing	2,500	2,510	2,580	-0.4	-3.1
Food Manufacturing	460	460	420	0.0	9.5
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	110	110	100	0.0	10.0
Machinery Manufacturing	30	30	30	0.0	0.0
Other Manufacturing	1,900	1,910	2,030	-0.5	-6.4
Service-Providing Industries	28,540	29,280	27,780	-2.5	2.7
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	7,020	6,980	6,760	0.6	3.8
Wholesale Trade	1,030	1,010	990	2.0	4.0
Retail Trade	4,610	4,610	4,490	0.0	2.7
Utilities	40	40	40	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,340	1,320	1,240	1.5	8.1
Information	680	690	610	-1.4	11.5
Financial Activities	1,710	1,740	1,930	-1.7	-11.4
Professional & Business Services	3,670	3,650	3,410	0.5	7.6
Educational & Health Services	2,630	2,680	2,790	-1.9	-5.7
Leisure & Hospitality	3,380	3,340	3,300	1.2	2.4
Other Services	880	950	920	-7.4	-4.3
Government Education	3,900	4,670	3,810	-16.5	2.4
Government Administration	4,660	4,570	4,250	2.0	9.6

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

Southeast Idaho Table 2: July 2004
Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Figures for
Southeast Idaho Counties

	July 2004 Preliminary	June 2004 Revised	July 2003 History
Bear Lake	4.7%	4.5%	4.3%
Bingham	4.5%	4.6%	4.6%
Caribou	7.3%	6.7%	7.1%
Franklin	2.7%	2.6%	3.3%
Oneida	2.3%	2.8%	3.1%
Power	9.3%	1.0%	8.4%

June and July. Temporary lay-offs in *Manufacturing – Food Processing* caused the rate increase.

Nonfarm Payroll Jobs decreased by 690 from June to July 2004. The loss of 770 jobs in *Government Education* caused the large decline. The *Goods-Producing Industries* gained 50 jobs from June to July. *Construction* increased from 1,650 to 1,710, a gain of 60 jobs. *Manufacturing* decreased from 2,510 jobs in June to 2,500 jobs in July for a loss of 10 jobs. *Manufacturing* often fluctuates minimally from month to month and the ten-job loss is typical. The *Service-Providing Industries* lost 740 jobs from June to July. Job losses occurred in both *Government Education* and *Educational & Health Services*, the result of school closures. *Government Administration*

added 90 jobs because of temporary hiring for parks and recreation activity, and road construction projects. Special events and increased tourists traveling throughout the area created additional jobs in *Leisure & Hospitality* (40) and *Professional & Business Services* (20).

AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Bannock County

- Infrastructure improvements in Old Town Pocatello are about 16 days behind schedule. Construction began in early June and was projected to take approximately 90 days, but removal of large boulders and problems with parts have delayed the project. Despite construction difficulties, Old Town businesses are accessible and remain open.
- Two Shoshone-Bannock fire crews were called to assist with the Boardman Fire near Featherville. Each crew consists of 20 firefighters. Once the Boardman Fire is under control the Shoshone-Bannock crews will likely be deployed to assist with fires in other parts of Central Idaho.
- Pocatello High School's new \$3.2 million gymnasium was completed in August and was ready for the fall 2004 school year. Construction began earlier this year and its completion has been widely anticipated by students as well as the community. The structure's outside matches the 100-year-old plus school and abuts the school's existing building.

Bear Lake County

- HomeQuest Mortgage opened in Montpelier. The office is located at 358 Washington, Suite 10, and offers mortgage financing, debt consolidation assistance, refinancing, and construction loans.
- Governor Kempthorne approved a drought emergency declaration for Bear Lake County. Bear Lake County irrigators receive water from storage in Bear Lake. Inflow to Bear Lake between April and July was 22 percent of average. Area irrigators will receive less than 40 percent of their normal allotment of water this year.

Caribou County

- Dr. Bryan S. Anderson has started practicing family medicine in Caribou County. An open house was held in Soda Springs and Grace, where the new physician will divide his time. Dr. Anderson's practice will be at the Lakeview Medical Clinic in Soda Springs and the Grace Clinic in Grace.

- A new physical therapy clinic, Sports Therapy and Athletic Rehabilitation, opened in Soda Springs. The clinic is located on Highway 30 near Bowman Chiropractic.

Franklin County

- An Internet distribution business in Oxford rapidly became a manufacturing business. XO Corporation manufactures whelping boxes. The business, which is still Internet and phone driven, recently purchased a larger facility so it can expand its product lines.
- Construction on the new Preston High School library and cafeteria will continue during the current school year. Completion is expected by the beginning of the 2005-2006 school year. Fences were installed to provide a safety zone and routes for students to move between buildings safely.

Oneida County

- Oneida County is on the move. Richard Westerberg, the economic development specialist for Oneida, Franklin, and Bear Lake Counties has set up an office in Malad. The Malad City/Oneida County Economic Development office is located at 59 Bannock Street. Westerberg has been working on economic development in Oneida County for the past two years, and will be available to assist businesses and the community every Thursday or more often if needed.

Power County

- Great American Video has opened in American Falls. The store is located on Idaho Street and offers new and used VHS and DVD movies, video games, and accessories. Great American Video provides free popcorn to shoppers and shows free kids movies. The business employs approximately 15 people.

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NORTHEAST IDAHO

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON, & TETON COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

July's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Bonneville Labor Market Area (LMA) remained constant from June at 3.7 percent as seen in Northeast Table 1. While Bingham and Butte Counties showed slight decreases month-over-month, the decreases were not enough to lower the LMA rate by even a tenth of a percentage point since the rates in Bonneville and Jefferson Counties remained the same. Year-over-year, the Bonneville LMA's unemployment rate decreased one-tenth of a percentage point while Butte County showed the greatest change by dropping 2.2 percentage points. While the Butte County data shows 16 more people in the labor force, it also shows 34 fewer unemployed people compared to July 2003. A change of 34 people in a county with a small labor force makes a large change in the unemployment rate. Bingham County decreased one-tenth of a percentage point and Jefferson County increased two-tenths of a percentage point, while Bonneville County remained constant. Butte County had the lowest unemployment rate in the LMA at 3.1 percent, followed closely by Bonneville County at 3.3 percent. Idaho Falls, the largest city in the LMA increased, experienced one-tenth of a percentage point increase from June, but remained constant at 3.4 percent compared to July 2003. The LMA's July 2004 unemployment rate was 1.2 percentage points lower than the state's rate of 4.9 percent and 1.8 percentage points lower than the national rate of 5.5 percent.

Of the other six counties in Northeast Idaho, Fremont, Madison and Teton Counties showed only slight increases of one- to three-tenths of a percentage point over the month while Clark, Custer and Lemhi Counties showed six- to seven-tenths of a percentage point decreases from June to July. Typically, rural counties that are more heavily involved in agriculture can be affected during this time if wholesaling or proc-

Northeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Bonneville, Bingham, Butte, and Jefferson Counties

	Jul 2004*	Jun 2004	Jul 2003	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	87,490	88,120	84,720	-0.7	3.3
Unemployment	3,240	3,290	3,210	-1.5	0.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.7	3.7	3.8		
Total Employment	84,240	84,830	81,510	-0.7	3.3
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	89,230	89,740	86,420	-0.6	3.3
Unemployment	2,870	2,810	2,830	2.1	1.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.2	3.1	3.3		
Total Employment	86,360	86,920	83,590	-0.6	3.3
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	67,710	68,730	66,300	-1.5	2.1
Goods-Producing Industries	11,070	10,960	10,720	1.0	3.3
Natural Resources & Mining	80	70	70	14.3	14.3
Construction	6,140	5,950	5,210	3.2	17.9
Manufacturing	4,850	4,940	5,440	-1.8	-10.8
Food Manufacturing	2,750	2,810	2,870	-2.1	-4.2
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	300	280	270	7.1	11.1
Machinery Manufacturing	410	420	450	-2.4	-8.9
Other Manufacturing	1,390	1,430	1,850	-2.8	-24.9
Service-Providing Industries	56,640	57,770	55,580	-2.0	1.9
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	15,690	15,820	15,210	-0.8	3.2
Wholesale Trade	5,300	5,400	5,120	-1.9	3.5
Retail Trade	8,450	8,480	8,250	-0.4	2.4
Utilities	120	120	120	0.0	0.0
Transportation	1,820	1,820	1,720	0.0	5.8
Information	1,130	1,120	980	0.9	15.3
Financial Activities	2,230	2,230	2,210	0.0	0.9
Professional & Business Services	12,170	12,210	12,280	-0.3	-0.9
Educational & Health Services	6,890	6,860	6,570	0.4	4.9
Leisure & Hospitality	5,700	5,670	5,620	0.5	1.4
Other Services	2,090	2,030	2,260	3.0	-7.5
Government Education	4,010	5,030	4,080	-20.3	-1.7
Government Administration	6,730	6,800	6,370	-1.0	5.7

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

essing of the commodities are done in the same county. Agriculture in rural communities has an influence on the number of unemployed people during these months, especially if commodities are processed or sold at wholesale out of the same county where they are grown. The capability and longevity of the storage facilities for fresh produce affects businesses relying on the commodities, and farmers sometimes hold onto their products for better prices from May to July if storage facilities are adequate to do so. So, unemployment can increase or decrease depending on whether businesses can still obtain enough product to operate. In July employers can more easily shut down operations and keep only minimum staff to help with maintenance.

Year-over-year changes were slight except for an increase in Clark County's unemployment of nine-tenths of a percentage point and Madison

County's decrease of eight-tenths of a percentage point. Clark County is still experiencing employee changes from a major employer's restructuring, and many new businesses have opened in Madison County over the year. Fremont County had the highest unemployment rate of the six counties at 6.6 percent while Madison County had the lowest at 1.6 percent.

Nonfarm Payroll Jobs decreased by 1,020 jobs over the month for a total of 67,710 jobs for July. *Government Education* jobs showed the greatest loss (which is also the same amount of the total *Nonfarm Payroll Job* decrease – 1,020). This is expected at this time of year since June starts summer vacation for the schools. All other small job losses and gains even out to zero. *Construction* added the most jobs at 190. The year 2004 continues to be a good one for *Construction*.

Year-over-year, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 1,410. *Construction* added the most at over 900 jobs. Both residential and commercial projects were well underway and going strong in the three larger counties. *Retail* and *Wholesale Trade* combined added 380 jobs. With interest rates still low and national threats at a distance, consumer confidence seemed to be strong. *Government Administration* jobs increased by 360 as three of the four counties in the LMA continued to add population, increasing the need for most services. *Educational & Health Services* also increased by over 300 jobs with medical facilities expanding and growing as demand warranted. Losses were noted in *Manufacturing*; 460 of the 590 jobs were lost in *Other Manufacturing* (manufacturing other than food, fabricated metal products, and machinery). All other industry losses were fewer than 200 jobs each.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Bonneville County

- Many residents have been watching the renovation of the building at the corner of Rollandet Avenue and Sunnyside Road, wondering if a new business would locate there. It ends up that DocuTech, a company that has been in Idaho Falls for 13 years, is moving there from its current location off of Lincoln Road. The newly renovated DocuTech building has 14,000-square feet of office space, accommodating up to 120 employees, and is equipped with full fiber optic uplink for secure data exchange. DocuTech provides compliance services and documentation technology for the mortgage industry. The company relocated due to a substantial increase in business over the past few years.

Madison County

- Jensen Jewelers recently opened a new store in the Teton River Village on North Second East in Rexburg. The store employs five full-time employees along with manager Josh Dalton. Don and Mary Jensen founded Jensen Jewelers in Twin Falls in 1956. The new Rexburg store brings the total num-

ber of Jensen Jewelers to 12 throughout Idaho, Montana, and Nevada.

- Promark Research is the newest call center to move into Rexburg. Headquartered in Houston, Texas, the call center conducts mostly political opinion polling and research for legislators and presidential campaigns. The company also conducts research for communities and polls consumers on how much they are willing to pay for specific products. Promark cited a strong work ethic and a growing number of BYU-Idaho students as factors in locating in Rexburg rather than four other states it was evaluating. The company currently employs about 40 people, but will have 60 to 70 full- and part-time employees soon and plans to expand to 100 workers in plus 15 to 20 administrators. This is the third location for the company. Houston and Huntsville, Texas, are the other locations. It is located at the corner of Main and Center Streets.
- Bob Carlson finally decided what to do with his lot that has been vacant at Main and Center Streets for almost six years. From 1941 until the end of 1997, the site was home to Rexburg Food Center but was razed for other pursuits. Now construction is underway to add Main Street Crossing, a four-unit strip mall, to this prime Rexburg location. The completed project will be 7,000-square feet and each unit will sport a different front facade design. Gandolfo's New York Delicatessen, owned by Darren Ernst, will be the first tenant. Other tenants have not been identified.
- Big O Tires has started construction at the corner of Second East and Seventh North in Rexburg. This was the location of Central Park Burgers, but that business is being relocated to the other side of the street in a vacant lot north of Horkley's service station.

Other Counties

- Family Dollar Stores is opening new locations in Idaho Falls, Blackfoot, and St. Anthony. The nationwide chain store is similar to King's or Ben Franklin's. The store offers a variety of goods—from clothes to office supplies—at discount prices. The Idaho Falls location is at 145 North Woodruff Avenue south of WinCo Foods. Blackfoot's location is at 67 Southwest Main Street. El Dorado Saloon will be razed to make room for the store. The St. Anthony location is in downtown. Family Dollar has 5,300 stores in 44 states.

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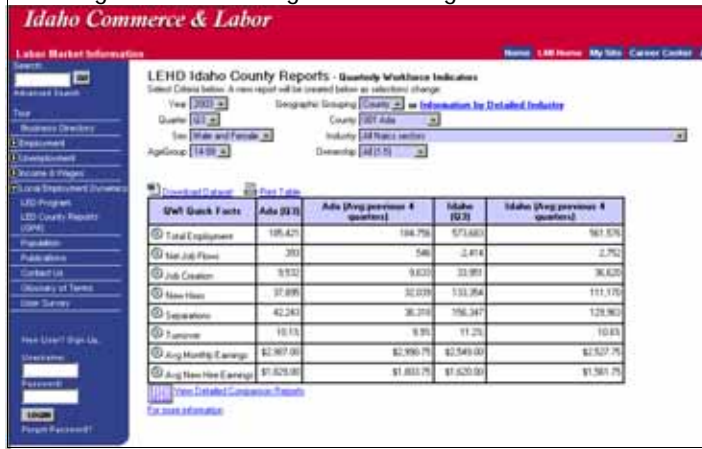
More LED state partners continue to join the partnership. As of late September, member states include: Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin. Some questions that the data will answer include:

- **Decision Makers**—for strategic planning purposes
- **Employers**—for questions regarding workers and wages
- **Workers**—for questions regarding jobs and pay

1 ~ North
2 ~ North Central
3 ~ Northeast
4 ~ South Central
5 ~ Southeast
6 ~ Southwest

Boundary
Bonner
Kootenai
Shoshone
Bennett
Latah
Clearwater
Nez Perce
Idaho
Lamb
Custer
Clark
Fremont
Jefferson
Madison
Teton
Butte
Carnas
Blaine
Bingham
Caribou
Cassia
Coeur d'Alene
Gooding
Lincoln
Jerome
Pocatello
Power
Sawtooth
Shoshone
Twin Falls
Owyhee
Elmore
Ada
Canyon
Cam
Boise
Valley
Washington
Adams

FYI Figure 2: LED Program Web Page



- Economic Development Organizations—information for prospective or expanding businesses
- Educational and Training Organizations—information regarding potential students and future curriculum opportunities
- Transportation Organizations—information on where people live and work

The Eight QWIs

- **Total Employment:** Beginning of Quarter Employment is the total number of workers who were employed by the same employer in both the current and previous quarter.
- **Net Job Flow (Job Change):** The difference between current and previous employment at each business.
- **Job Creation (Job Gains):** The number of new jobs that are created by either new area businesses or the expansion of employment by existing firms.

- **New Hires:** Total number of workers (accessions) that were also not employed by that employer during the previous four quarters.
- **Separations:** Total number of workers who were employed by a business in the current quarter, but not in the subsequent quarter.
- **Turnover Rate:** Turnover Rate = (1/2) multiplied by (accessions X separations), divided by average employment
- **Average Monthly Earnings for Full-Quarter Employees** (those employees that worked every month during a quarter): Total quarterly earnings of all full-quarter employees divided by the number of full-quarter employees, divided by 3.
- **Average Monthly Earnings for Full-Quarter New Hires** (workers that worked every month during the quarter but did not work in the prior quarter): Total quarterly earnings of all full-quarter new hires divided by the number of full-quarter new hires, divided by 3.

An example of LED data providing additional information on the creation of jobs is given in the article *Trends in Job Creation 2001—2002* (below).

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MORE F.Y.I.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

TRENDS IN JOB CREATION 2001—2002

The increase in job creation in Idaho between 2001 and 2002 is one indicator that the state's economy is improving. In 2002, 1,581 more jobs were created than were lost, which was a reversal from 2001 when 354 more jobs were lost than created.

Job creation and job loss are new employment indicators made available through the Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program, a partnership among the U.S. Census Bureau, Idaho Commerce & Labor, and 19 other state partners. The indicators will be produced quarterly, using Idaho's Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW, formerly ES202) reports.

To understand the new measures of economic health, establishing some new concepts was necessary:

- » **Beginning of Quarter Employment (B):** Total number of workers who were employed by the same employer in both the current and previous quarter.
- » **End of Quarter Employment (E):** Total number of workers who were employed by the same employer in both the current and subsequent quarter.
- » **Job Creation (JC):** The number of new jobs that are created by either new area businesses or the expansion of employment by existing firms.

To calculate job creation for a quarter, the total number of jobs is summed across firms where the end-of-quarter firm employment is greater than the beginning-of-quarter firm employment in the current quarter.

Conversely, job loss is the total number of jobs summed across firms where the end-of-quarter firm employment is less than the beginning-of-quarter firm employment in the current quarter.

Job creation and job loss for four quarters is summed to obtain total gains or losses for the year. The percent of those gains/losses of beginning employment for the year, per county, is calculated. In Ada County in 2001, for example, 121,832 jobs were created and 119,122 jobs were lost. The county's employment was 343,365 as of January 1, which resulted in eight-tenths of a percent jobs creation rate for Ada County in 2001.

Ada County is by far the largest Idaho county in terms of population and employment, and grew from a job gain of eight-tenths of a percent in 2001 to a 1.4 percent job gain in 2002. Other counties with more than 50,000 beginning employment in 2001 are: Bannock, Bonneville, Canyon, Kootenai, and Twin Falls Counties. Of these, only Canyon County had a job loss in 2001. All five counties had job gains in 2002, and every county either stayed the same or improved over time.

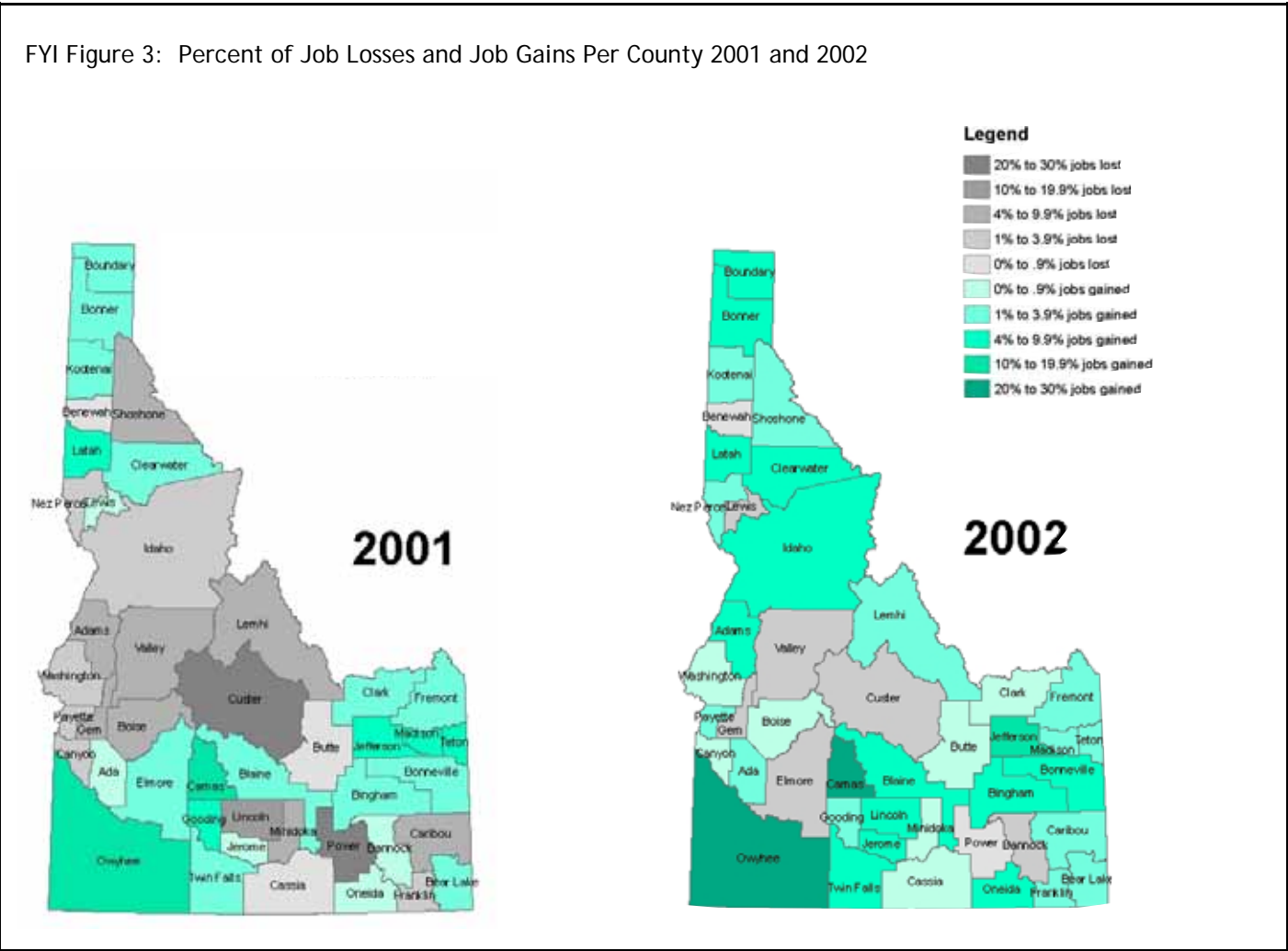
Of the 38 less populated counties in Idaho, 19 had job losses in 2001 and 19 had job gains. Over time, 30 counties gained jobs and eight showed declines. The maps in

FYI Figure 3 show the percent of job loss or gain per county over time.

Overall, 35 counties gained ground between 2001 and 2002 because job losses decreased, or job losses advanced to job gains, or job gains increased. These counties are Ada, Adams, Bear Lake, Bingham, Blaine, Boise, Bonner, Bonneville, Boundary, Butte, Camas, Canyon, Caribou, Cassia, Clearwater, Custer, Franklin, Gem, Idaho, Jefferson, Jerome, Kootenai, Latah, Lemhi, Lincoln, Minidoka, Nez Perce, Oneida, Owyhee, Payette, Power, Shoshone, Twin Falls, Valley, and Washington Counties. Eight counties lost ground from 2001 to 2002 because more job losses occurred, or job gains dropped to job losses, or job gains decreased. These were Benewah, Clark, Elmore, Fremont, Gooding, Lewis, Madison, and Teton Counties.

The percent of job loss or job gain in each county from 2001 to 2002 is shown on the maps in FYI Figure 3.

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Glossary of Labor Market Terms

Agriculture Employment: Persons on agriculture payrolls who work or receive pay for any period during the survey week. This includes owners, operators, unpaid family members who work at least 15 hours a week, and hired laborers.

Average Hourly Earnings/Average Weekly Hours: The average total money earnings earned by production or non-supervisory workers for selected industries. The average number of hours worked by production or non-supervisory workers including overtime, paid vacation, and sick leave. The data is collected for the week including the 12th of the month.

Average Weekly Earnings: Average Hourly Earnings multiplied by Average Weekly Hours.

Civilian Labor Force: A count of non-institutional persons 16 years of age and over residing within a specific geographic area, excluding members of armed forces, who are classified as employed, unemployed and seeking employment, or involved in a labor dispute.

Consumer Price Index (CPI): A national index measuring changes over time in the price of a fixed market basket of goods and services. There are two indexes—the All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) represents the buying habits of about 80 percent of the non-institutional population of the United States, and the Urban Wage & Clerical Workers (CPI-W) represents 40 percent of the population.

Covered Employers: Employers who are subject to state and federal Unemployment Insurance laws.

Durable Goods: Also known as “hard goods” because they include items manufactured or provided by wholesalers with a normal life expectancy of three years or more.

Employed: Individuals, 16 years of age or older, who worked at least 1 hour for pay or profit or worked at least 15 unpaid hours in a family business during the week including the 12th day of the month. Individuals are also counted as employed if they had a job but did not work because they were: ill, on vacation, in a labor dispute, prevented from working because of bad weather, or temporarily absent for similar reasons.

Initial Claim: Any notice of unemployment filed to request (1) a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation or (2) a second or subsequent period of unemployment within a benefit year or period of eligibility.

Labor Market Area (LMA): An area that consists of a central city or cities and the surrounding territory within commuting distance. It is an economically integrated geographic area within which individuals can reside and find employment without changing place of residence. Idaho has nine LMAs.

Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA): An area that has either a city with a population of at least 50,000 or a Bureau of Census urbanized area of at least 50,000 and a

total metropolitan area of at least 100,000. The Office of Management and Budget designates the MSAs. There are five MSAs in Idaho—Boise City-Nampa MSA (including Ada and Canyon Counties), Coeur d’Alene MSA (Kootenai County), Idaho Falls MSA (Jefferson and Bonneville Counties), Lewiston MSA (Nez Perce County in Idaho and Asotin County in Washington), Logan MSA (Franklin County and the Logan, Utah, Metro Area), and Pocatello City (Bannock County).

Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment: Persons on nonfarm establishment payrolls (including employees on paid sick leave, paid holiday, or paid vacation) who work or receive pay for any part of the week including the 12th of the month. It is a count of jobs by place of work. It does not include self-employed, unpaid volunteer or family workers, domestic workers in households, military personnel and persons who are laid off, on leave without pay, or on strike for the entire reference period.

Nondurable Goods: Also known as “soft goods” because they include items manufactured or provided by wholesalers that generally last for only a short period of time (three years or less).

Seasonally Adjusted: Data is seasonally adjusted to remove the impact of regular events that occur at the same time every year such as the effect of cold weather on outdoor activities, the Christmas holiday, or the summer influx of youth into the labor market.

Unemployed: Those individuals, 16 years of age or older, who do not have a job but are available for work and actively seeking work during the week including the 12th of the month. The only exceptions to these criteria are individuals who are waiting to be recalled from a layoff and individuals waiting to report to a new job within 30 days—these, too, are considered unemployed.

Unemployment Insurance: Unemployment Insurance is a program for the accumulation of funds paid by employers, to be used for the payment of Unemployment Insurance to workers during periods of unemployment which are beyond their control.

Unemployment Rate: The number of persons unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labor force.

Weekly Benefit Amount: The amount payable to a claimant for a compensable week of total unemployment.

Weeks Claimed: The number of weeks that unemployed workers claimed Unemployment Insurance benefits.

Weeks Compensated: The number of weeks for which compensation was actually paid.